

NEWTON YOUTH COMMISSION Meeting
March 2, 2011 MINUTES
Location: Newton City Hall Cafeteria

Present: Joe De Vito Chair, Anthony Bibbo, Richard Dyer, Matt Green, Peter Harrington, Jeff Mace, Ellen Manning, Stephan Ross, John Staulo, Robert Staulo, Kirsten Tuohy
Staff: Ruth Hoshino, School Nurse Leader, Health and Human Services
Guests: Tom Pomeroy
Student Interns: Teekhon Davidoff(NSHS), Jaya Forsythe(NNHS), Zoë Smith(Dana Hall), Jay Sobel (NSHS)

The meeting was opened at 7:05 PM and chaired by Joe De Vito.

A vote to accept the minutes of January 5, 2011 was passed. (No February meeting due to snow)

Treasurer's Report: The budget for FY 2010 operating budget is \$2500. A vote to approve the expenditure of about \$200 for a video camera for the Mayor's Public Service Internship Program was approved with a motion to amend pending mayoral approval.

New or Old Business

Mayor's Public Service Internship Program Update:

Weekly Wednesday meetings have been taking place at the Cherry Street Teen Center at 6pm. Youth Commission members are invited to attend. The group has been discussing teen topics that they believe Newton parents would be interested in. These conversations have been video recorded.

The interns gave a summary of the topics discussed:

- Is it okay for parents to "snoop" in their child's room?
 - If you are suspicious, ask your teen about it
 - If you have good reason to be concerned, you can search
- How are teens effected by tragic events in the community?

The interns posed a question to the Youth Commission:

- What is the general feeling of parents about having their teen in a relationship? Are curfews imposed? What is the feeling about middle school and high school?
 - Supervision is important – especially in the home. Couples should not be alone in the house or secluded in a closed door room.
 - Parents must meet the girlfriend/boyfriend
 - Connections should be made with the parents of the teen's romantic interest
 - It is natural to begin to develop romantic interest in middle and high school
 - Parents want teens to be safe and make good decisions
 - Teens must let their parents know where they are
 - Teens must be trustworthy
 - Communication is important

Youth Commission posed questions to the interns:

- How do you develop trust with your parents?
 - Good grades
 - Spending time together
 - Keeping informed of whereabouts
- How do you repair the trust if it gets broken?
 - Small steps
 - Substitute some peer time with family time
 - Offer information rather than one word answers to questions
 - Pitch in at home without being asked

- How are grandparents involved in your life?
 - Good to talk to about certain topics such as school, friends, plans for the future – relationship matters are usually shared with siblings or friends
- Where do you like to talk with your parents and what do you do when you need to talk and they do not recognize it/?
 - Good to talk in the car or at a restaurant – these are confined spaces
 - Go to parent's comfort zone (such as bedroom) for more difficult conversations

Any additional question suggestions can be emailed to Ellen Manning.

Safety Expo Event

A group of high school parents, students, educators and community partners are planning a week long event at Newton North starting on April 4th and culminating on April 9th. This will be all about safety and will include "A Promise to Adam" in tribute of North student Adam London who died in a car accident this past fall. Many events and resource tables will be on display. The question was raised about the Youth Commission having a table to highlight the work of the teen interns and to raise awareness of the commission.

Annual Award

The annual award dinner happens in June. Joe is seeking suggestions for a possible award recipient. Please email any suggestions to Joe or Ruth.

Sponsoring Suggestion

Rick Dyer recommended a performance group called the *Improbable Players* – using theatre to teach about substance abuse prevention. It is interactive and uses a question and answer format. Perhaps the Youth Commission can be involved in funding and/or sponsoring a performance for high school students. Rick will check on more details related to cost, scheduling, etc. Several members of the commission have seen these performances and felt they were worthwhile. The interns felt they preferred this type of engaging, interactive style over a straight lecture.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 6, 2011 at 7 PM

Respectfully submitted by Ruth Hoshino